EXPLORING THE WORLD · NATURE

Garden Bugs

8 pages to observe, count, and hunt for bugs in the backyard · ages 3 to 6



1	4	8	12
observation sheet	butterfly stages	bugs to count	bugs to find

Child's name: _____

For parents and teachers

A backyard, a flowerpot, or the local park is all you need. Young children learn by looking closely: **insects have 6 legs, 3 body parts, and 2 antennae**. Spiders, worms, and snails live in the garden too, but **they are not insects**, and figuring that out is part of the fun. Read the instructions aloud to children who can't read yet.

How to use the pages

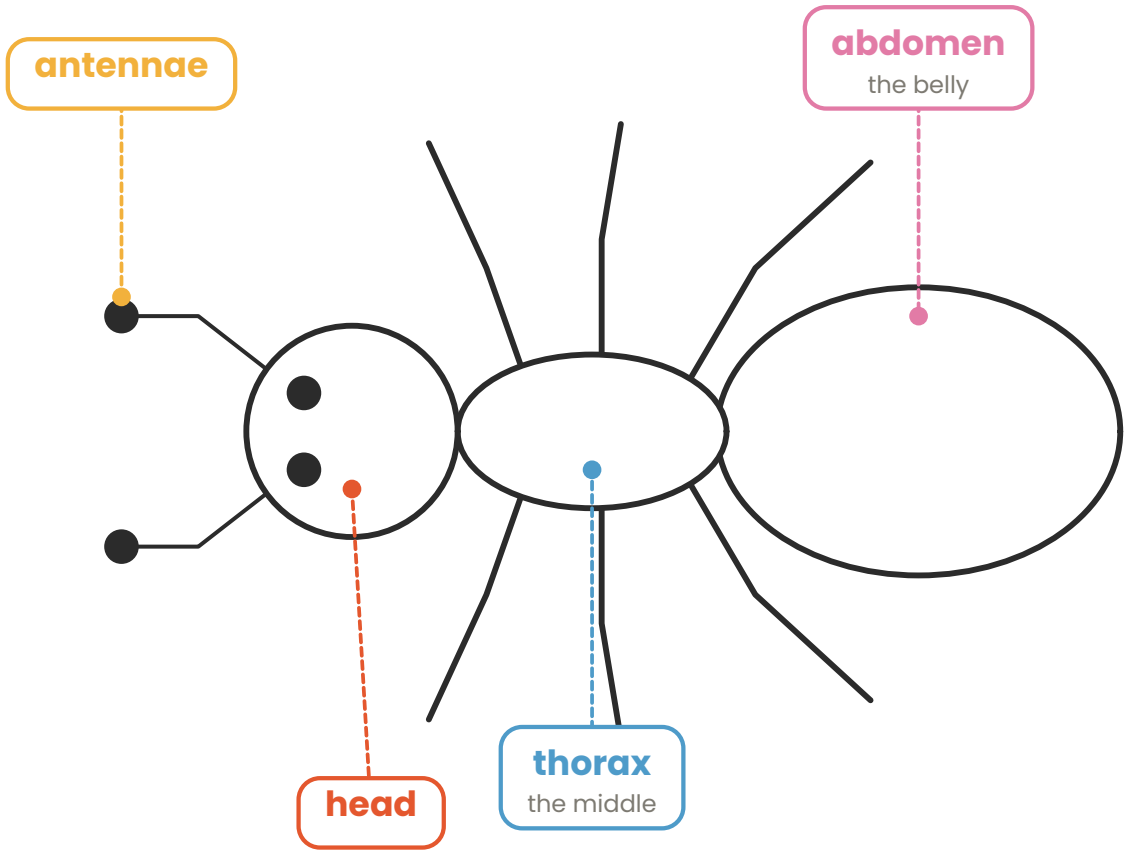
- **p. 2** **What is an insect?** Color the ant and count the body parts, legs, and antennae together.
- **p. 3** **Magnifying glass sheet:** take it outside, watch a bug, and draw it inside the lens. Print several copies.
- **p. 4** **Butterfly life cycle:** cut out the 4 stages and glue them in order, following the arrows.
- **p. 5** **Count the legs:** count and circle the number. Color only the ones with 6 legs, which are the insects.
- **p. 6** **Bug hunt:** mark each bug you find in the yard or the park.
- **p. 7–8** **Ladybugs 1 to 6** to draw the spots, plus a **certificate and answer key**.

Garden safety: look, don't grab. Bees and wasps can sting, spiders are for watching from a distance, and some fuzzy caterpillars have stinging hairs. Put every bug back where you found it, and everyone washes their hands at the end.

2 What is an insect?

Color the ant. Then count with a grown-up: how many legs? How many antennae?

Name: _____ Date: _____



Every insect has:

6 legs	3 body parts	2 antennae

Let's talk: ants use their antennae to smell and to "talk" to other ants. What do you use to smell things?

3 Magnifying glass sheet

Look at a bug up close and draw what you saw inside the magnifying glass.

Name: _____ Date: _____



Its name is:

_____

_____

Circle the answers:

Where was it?

on a leaf | on a flower | in the dirt | on a tree trunk | on a rock

What was it doing?

walking | flying | eating | resting | hiding

How many legs?

0 | 6 | 8 | lots | couldn't see

How big?

smaller than my fingernail | about as big as my finger | bigger than my finger

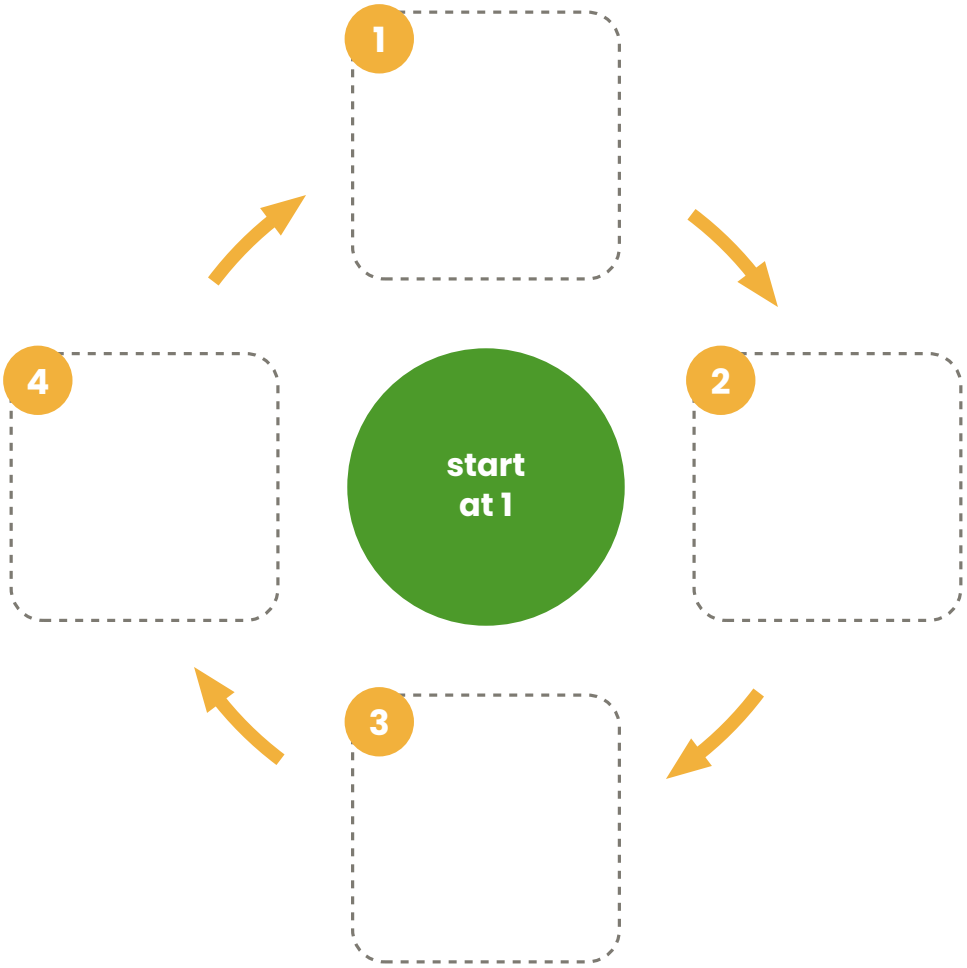
What color was it? Color the circle the color you saw:

Is it an insect? YES | NO | NOT SURE

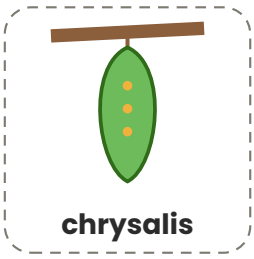
4 The butterfly life cycle

Cut out the 4 stages at the bottom and glue each one in the right place.

Name: _____ Date: _____



✂ **Stages to cut out (they're mixed up!)**



chrysalis

It stays very still and changes.



egg

The butterfly lays tiny eggs on a leaf.



butterfly

It comes out ready to fly!



caterpillar

It hatches and eats lots of leaves.

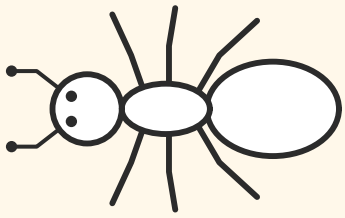
Cut out only the dotted squares. The sentences underneath help you work out the order.

Let's talk: a caterpillar eats so much that its skin gets too tight, so it sheds its skin several times as it grows!

5 Count the legs

Count the legs and circle the number. Then color only the insects (6 legs).

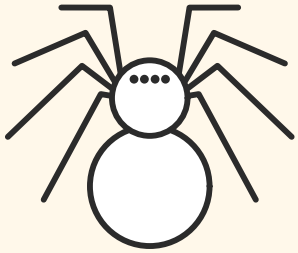
Name: _____ Date: _____



ant

0 6 8

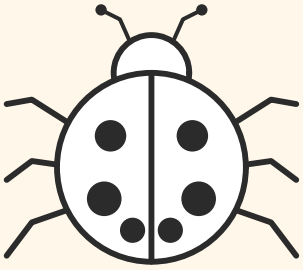
legs



spider

0 6 8

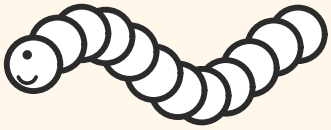
legs



ladybug

0 6 8

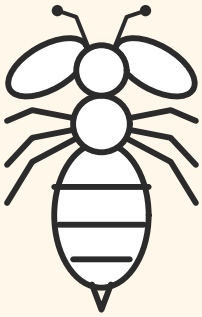
legs



worm

0 6 8

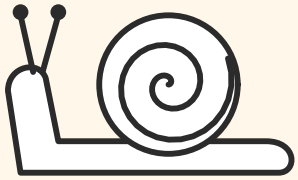
legs



bee

0 6 8

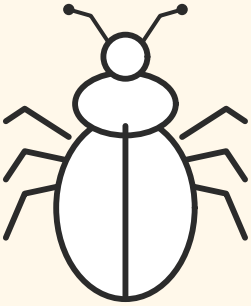
legs



snail

0 6 8

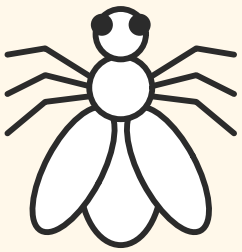
legs



beetle

0 6 8

legs



fly

0 6 8

legs

6 Bug hunt

Look in the yard, the park, or flowerpots. Color a star for each one you find.

Name: _____ Date: _____



ant

☆ ☆ ☆



ladybug

☆ ☆ ☆



butterfly

☆ ☆ ☆



bee

just look!

☆ ☆ ☆



worm

☆ ☆ ☆



snail

☆ ☆ ☆



spider

just look!

☆ ☆ ☆



spider web

☆ ☆ ☆



caterpillar

don't touch!

☆ ☆ ☆



fly

☆ ☆ ☆



cricket

☆ ☆ ☆



beetle

☆ ☆ ☆

Where to look

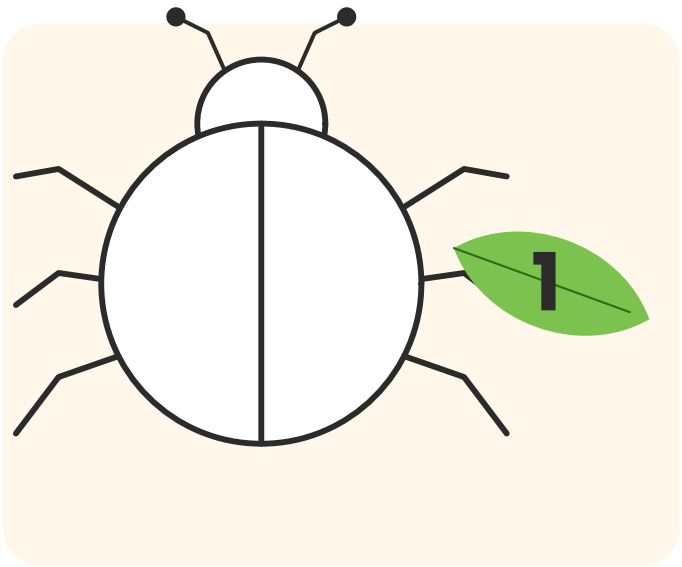
Under rocks and flowerpots (put them back afterwards!), on flowers and leaves, on tree trunks, and near damp soil after the rain. Bees, spiders, and caterpillars are for looking at only.

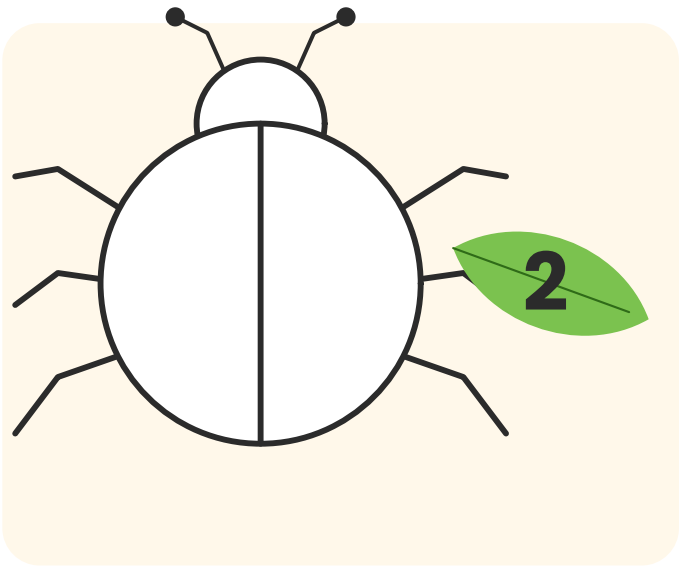
How many different bugs did you find? ◯

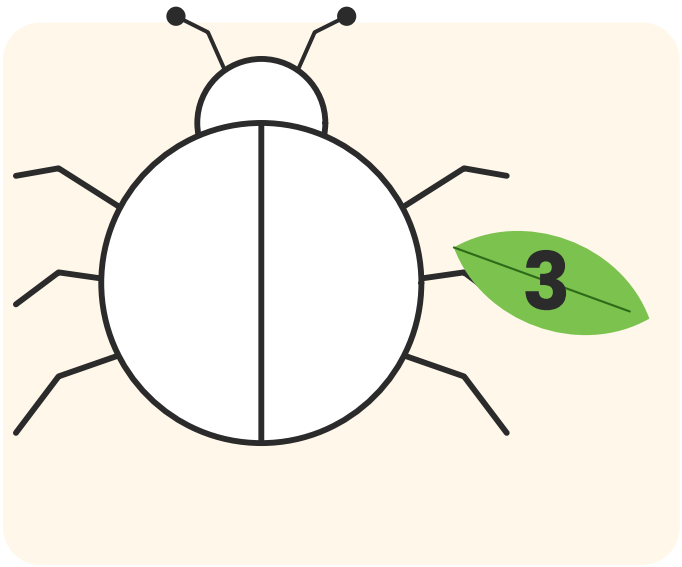
7 Ladybugs 1 to 6

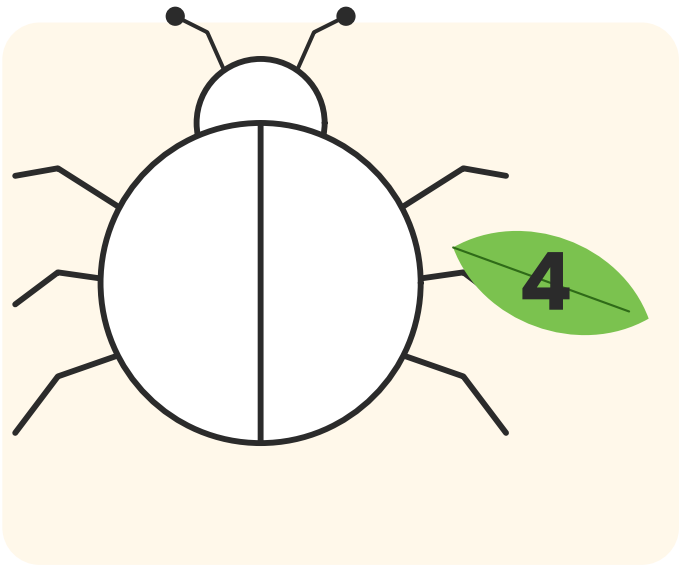
Draw as many spots on each ladybug's back as the number on its leaf.

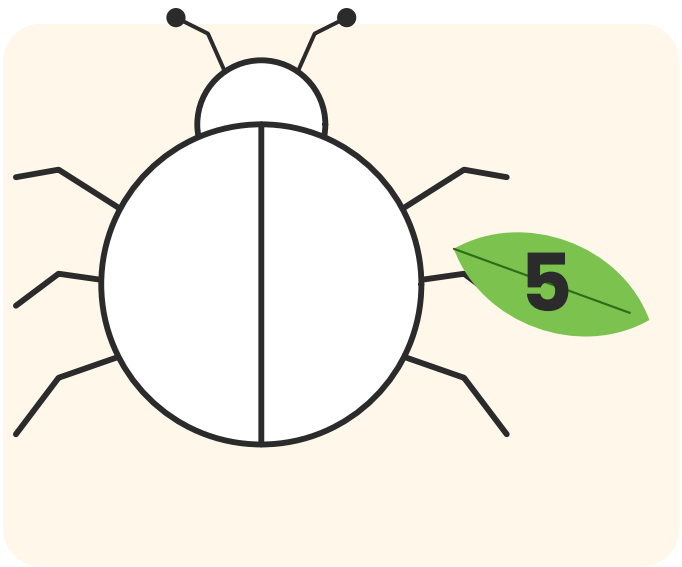
Name: _____ Date: _____

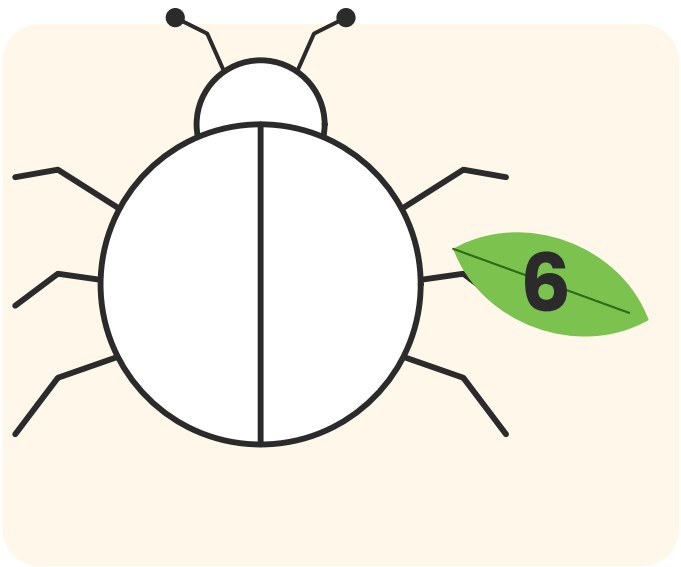












Fun fact: real ladybugs can have lots of spots, a few, or none at all. Some aren't even red!



CERTIFICATE

Garden Explorer

This certificate is awarded to

_____

who looked through a magnifying glass, counted legs, and learned that **every insect has 6 legs**. And promised to take care of the garden's little creatures!

_____ Date

_____ Grown-up's signature

✂ cut along the dotted line

Answer key (for grown-ups)

Page 2 · what is an insect

6 legs (all attached to the thorax), 3 body parts (head, thorax, and abdomen), and 2 antennae.

Page 4 · butterfly life cycle

1. egg 2. caterpillar 3. chrysalis 4. butterfly. Then the butterfly lays new eggs and the cycle starts again.

Page 5 · legs

Ant 6, spider 8, ladybug 6, worm 0, bee 6, snail 0, beetle 6, fly 6. The insects are the ant, ladybug, bee, beetle, and fly. A spider is an arachnid, a worm is an annelid, and a snail is a mollusk.

Page 6 · bug hunt

Of the 12, the insects are the ant, ladybug, butterfly, bee, fly, cricket, and beetle. The caterpillar is an insect too: it's a young butterfly or moth!